

Internship Summary Essay

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Internship at Baisch & Skinner

Over the summer I had the wonderful opportunity to be an intern at the floral wholesaler called Baisch & Skinner in Wichita, Kansas. I have had the chance to work in the floral industry for the past four and a half years, but I had always taken for granted the wholesale side of the industry. Working at Baisch & Skinner this summer gave me a greater appreciation for the wholesale side of the industry, and I am extremely grateful for all that I learned there this summer.

On my first day of work my boss, Fran, told me that working at a wholesaler was like working a lunch rush at McDonalds on a Friday. I laughed at first, but later I learned that she was right, there were always little lulls in the day but for the most part there was always a job to do and sometimes not enough people there to do it. Since I had a background in greenhouse management I had the chance to manage the greenhouse where all of our plants were housed for sale. This involved processing and checking in all new plants, watering, and cleaning the greenhouse on a daily basis. For me this was a great test of my skill and knowledge, over the summer I was able to implement many areas of my schooling. I used a lot of my skills on fixing the cooling cell in the greenhouse and diagnosing pest problems. Also while managing the greenhouse I had the chance to help place the plant orders for each week and teach some of the other staff techniques for running the greenhouse more efficiently.

I also had the opportunity to learn all aspects of taking, pulling, billing, and packing an order. In the course of a normal day each of the sales staff has a book of customers they call for orders, I had the chance to call many of the customers over the course of the summer as the staff took their vacations. This was a great way for me to improve my communication skills and learn what questions to ask to help the customer in the best way possible. After each order was taken then I got the chance to pull the flowers and supplies from the floor and coolers and bill and pack the order. I learned packing isn't as easy as it sounds; it is complicated since we were shipping perishable goods, and at times a very delicate product. To pack an order I had to have knowledge of each flower and how delicate it was, so that I wouldn't smash any of the flowers before they got to the floral shops.

There were many other aspects that I was involved in that were both exciting and educational. I had the chance to help with the two design shows we hosted this summer and got to meet some very

big names in the floral industry. I also went on customer visits, made deliveries, and helped redesign our show room a couple of times. Each of these areas was new and exciting to me, I have to say the scariest aspect for me was deliveries, just because I didn't know the area I was delivering to. But everyone was very helpful and found maps for me and made sure that if I got lost they were only a phone call away to help me find my way back. Each of the people I had the opportunity working with at Baisch & Skinner had something unique to teach me and I tried to take all of their teachings and store them in my mind.

The Baisch & Skinner Wichita branch is very much like a family and they always made me feel welcome, and they always encouraged me to ask as many questions as I needed to help me understand all aspects of the business. They were extremely understanding when mistakes were made and always tried to teach me how to avoid them the next time. This location had never had an intern before and it was just as new for them as it was for me, and they did a great job in my mind. I would encourage any student looking for an internship to go there. I had an amazing summer and am grateful for the opportunity provided by the American Floral Endowment, Baisch & Skinner, and my school.